

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending in the instant application. Claims 1-29 are rejected. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Claims based on the arguments presented below.

103 Rejections

Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al. in view of Prehn. The Applicant has reviewed the cited references and respectfully submits that the embodiments of the present invention that are set forth in Claims 1-29 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by Thomas et al. in view of Prehn.

The Examiner is respectfully directed to independent Claim 1 which is drawn to a method for interfacing with a home automation system using a router. Claim 1 is reproduced below in its entirety for the convenience of the Examiner.

1. A method for interfacing with a home automation system using a router comprising:
 - receiving a control signal from an instant messenger application, the control signal received by the router via a communications network;
 - transmitting the control signal to at least one appliance to control the appliance in accordance with the control signal; and
 - transmitting a reply to the instant messenger application regarding a status of the appliance.

Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain limitations similar to those contained in Claim 1. Claims 2-7 depend from Claim 1 and recite further limitations of the present invention. Claims 9-14 depend from Claim 11 and recite further limitations of the present invention. Claims 16-22 depend from Claim 17 and recite further limitations of the present invention. Claims 24-29 depend from Claim 21 and recite further limitations of the present invention.

As mentioned above, Thomas et al. in view of Prehn does not anticipate or render obvious the embodiments of Applicant's invention as set forth in Claim 1. A critical deficiency of this combination is that the primary reference Thomas et al. does not teach or suggest each of the limitations of Claim 1 and the secondary reference Prehn fails to teach or suggest the limitations not taught or suggested by Thomas et al. In particular, Thomas et al. does not teach or suggest a method for interfacing with a home automation system using a router that includes "receiving a control signal from an instant messenger application, the control signal received by the router via a communications network" and, after transmitting the control signal to a home appliance "transmitting a reply to the instant messenger application regarding a status of the appliance" as is set forth in Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations). And, Prehn does not teach these limitations to remedy the deficiencies of Thomas et al.

Thomas et al. shows a dissimilar system for remote monitoring and control of appliances over a computer network. Thomas et al. discloses that home appliances can be monitored by a user who can initiate a process for control of an appliance after the completion of a process for checking its status. Importantly, the focus of Thomas et al. is remote but manual user monitoring and control of appliances. This is clearly distinct from the invention set forth in Applicant's claims which is related to the automated control of a home appliance via a router using an instant messaging application. It is important to note that the focus of Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations) is the router and its interactions as an interface between the instant messaging application and the appliance. It should be appreciated that Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations) defines specific interactions between the router and the instant messaging application and the router and the appliance that are simply not taught or suggested by Thomas et al.

In fact, nowhere in the Thomas et al. reference is a method that uses a router that receives a control signal from an instant messaging application, transmits the control system to a home appliance and transmits a status reply to the instant messaging application taught or suggested as is set forth in Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations).

Prehn does not teach or suggest a modification of Thomas et al. that would remedy the deficiencies of Thomas et al. outlined above. More specifically, Prehn does not teach or suggest a method for interfacing with a home automation system using a router that includes “receiving a control signal from an instant messenger application, the control signal received by the router via a communications network” and, after transmitting the control signal to a home appliance “transmitting a reply to the instant messenger application regarding a status of the appliance” as is set forth in Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations).

Prehn discloses a security communication and remote property monitoring/response system. Prehn discloses that an instant messaging system can be used to notify individuals on a contact list if an intruder to a monitored property is detected. This use of instant messaging is clearly distinct from that which is described in Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations) which focuses on the provision of a control signal and the receipt of a status signal by the instant messaging application. As such, the use of the instant messaging system disclosed by Prehn cannot be equated with the use of the instant messaging application as set forth in Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations). Accordingly, the disclosure of the instant messaging application by Prehn does not teach or suggest a use of instant messaging that would remedy the deficiencies of Thomas et al. Therefore, a combination of Thomas et al. and

Prehn exactly as is suggested in the Office Action would not meet all of the limitations of Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations).

Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in the Prehn reference is a method that uses a router to receive a control signal from an instant messaging application, transmit the control system to a home appliance and transmit a status reply to the instant messaging application taught or suggested as is set forth in Claim 1 (Claims 8, 15 and 23 contain similar limitations). Consequently, as the Prehn reference fails to remedy the deficiencies of Thomas et al., the embodiments of the present invention as are set forth in Claims 1, 8, 15 and 23 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Thomas et al. in view of Prehn.

As Thomas et al. in view of Prehn possess the deficiencies that are outlined above, Applicant respectfully submits that Thomas et al. in view of Prehn does not anticipate or render obvious the embodiments of the present claimed invention as set forth in Claims 1, 8, 15 and 23, and as such, Claims 1, 8, 15 and 23 are in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicant also respectfully submits that Thomas et al. in view of Prehn does not anticipate or render obvious the embodiments of the present claimed invention as set forth in Claims 2-7, 9-14, 16-22 and 24-29 dependent on Claims 1, 8, 15 and 23, and that Claims 2-7, 9-14, 16-22 and 16-24 overcome the Examiner's basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being dependent on allowable base claims.

Conclusion

In light of the above-listed amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the remaining Claims.

The Examiner is urged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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